



3106 Blowdown Salvage

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Proposal Name: 3106 Blowdown Salvage	jects/2021%20Proposed%20Projects/3106%20Salva ge?csf=1&web=1&e=aN4EnZ
Proposal Date: 6/1/2021	
Proponent Name: Lisa Laufenberg-Soward	GIS Info: T:\FS\NFS\WallowaWhitman\Program\Timber- 2400\GIS\Workspace\llaufenbergsoward\3106 Blowdown\3106 Layout\3106 Layout units.shp
Line Officer: Bill Gamble	
District: La Grande Ranger District	General Location: 3106 and 3106/100 roads in the Trail and Sugar Timber Sale units.
County(ies): Union	
Anticipated Implementation: 7/14/21	Applicable Management Areas: 1W, 3
Signing Authority: District Ranger	Legal Description: T2S R36E Sec. 11,12,13,14,24 and T2S R37E Sec. 18,19
PALS Tracking #: 60241	Elevation Range: 4500' est.
Project File: https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/Fs-r06- wwp/La%20Grande%20RD%20Projects/Small%20Pro	Watersheds: Five Points Creek-Grande Ronde River, HUC 1706010404

APPLICABLE CATEGORY/IES

This proposal is categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS because it fits the following category, pending extraordinary circumstance determinations:

Applicable Category: 36 CFR 220.6(e)(13) (DM Required)

This category applicable for 3106 Blowdown, because the district intends to remove only trees that were uprooted by a wind event.

**PROPOSAL****Proposal, to Include Design Features**

The La Grande Ranger District proposes a small salvage sale in the Mount Emily area. The project area experienced a high wind event in March of 2021 resulting in numerous damaged and uprooted trees. Trees in this condition support beetle infestation and create a public safety concern.

Windthrown trees scattered throughout the Trail (2013) and Sugar (2008) Vegetation Management Analysis areas have been consolidated into “blowdown units” totaling approximately 153 acres, all of which were previously analyzed for mechanical treatments. These units include a mixture of Douglas-fir, Ponderosa Pine, Grand Fir and Lodgepole Pine. There are an estimated 680 trees ranging from 12” diameter at breast height (DBH) to greater than 21” DBH. Salvage in the blowdown units are proposed in the following:

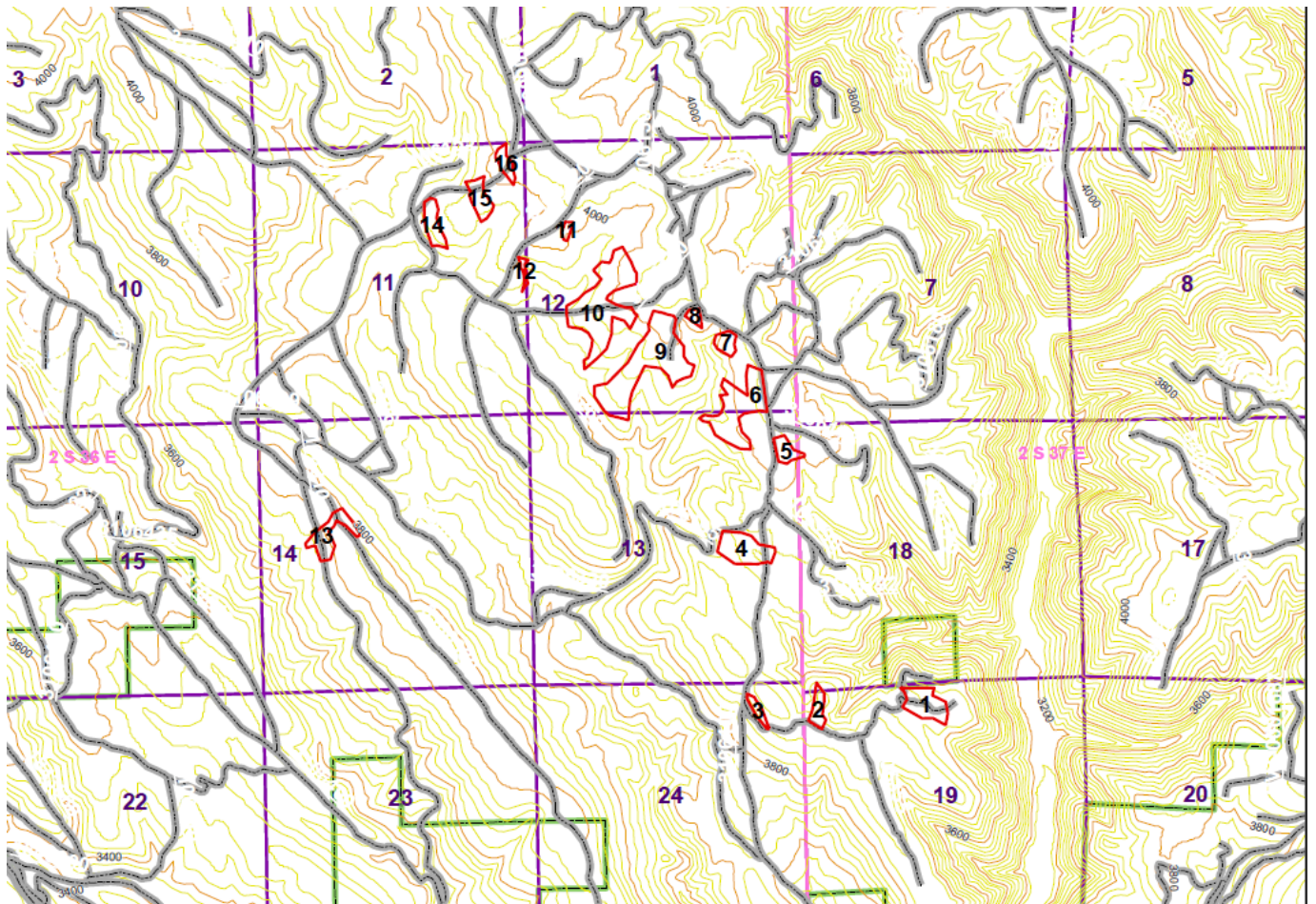
- Sugar units: 17,21,22 and 23
- Trail units: 2,2A,4,4A,17,18,21,24,28,31 and 33.

The district will haul on National Forest System Roads 3106 and 3106/100. Administrators may authorize tree removal within 300 feet of haul routes, within units analyzed for mechanical entry under Sugar or Trail Vegetation Management. We will not enter any non-forest/scabs with equipment or remove trees outside of Sugar or Trail units previously analyzed for mechanical entry.

- The detrimental soil effect of the current activity following project implementation must not exceed 20%
- Equipment will avoid shallow soils and scabs
- Ensure necessary water control structures are installed and maintained on skid trails and after all ground-disturbing activities
- Ensure erosion control structures are stabilized and working effectively
- Leave at least 60% effective ground cover on disturbed areas
 - If whole-tree yarding is used, backhaul slash and redistribute within the harvest area
 - If suitable organic material is unavailable within units then weed free straw or other equivalent erosion control measures should be applied
- Retain all standing snags
- Retain all snapped off tops
- Retain 6 large root-sprung trees marked with wildlife signs for high quality down wood habitat
- Operations will be avoided during raptor nesting season; January 15-August 15
- Operations will be avoided during the period between December 1 through April 1 in the project area units to ensure protections for big game during a sensitive period
- Where material is available, all treatment units would exceed the minimum levels for down woody material described in the table below for each species

SPECIES	PIECES PER AC	TONS PER AC	PIECE LENGTH AND DIAMETER SMALL END Diameter Min Length		TOTAL LINEAL LENGTH
Ponderosa Pine	3-6	5-10	12”	6ft	20-40 ft
Mixed Conifer	15-20	7-15	12”	6ft	100-140 ft
Lodgepole pine	15-20	7-15	8”	6ft	120-160 ft

MAP



**PROPOSAL SCREENING****REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS**

Given the nature of the proposal, the Responsible Official is requesting documentation to demonstrate compliance with the following regulatory considerations in addition to NEPA:

- ☒ **NFMA/Land Management Plan**
- ☒ **Clean Water Act**
- ☒ **Endangered Species Act**
- ☒ **Pertinent Executive Orders**
- ☒ **Sensitive Species (FSM 2670)**
- ☒ **National Historic Preservation Act**
- ☒ **Tribal Consultation**
- ☒ **Clean Air Act**

RESOURCE PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS REVIEW

The Line Officer/Responsible Official has requested the following resource areas to review the proposal to determine compliance with the regulatory considerations.

Table 1: Documentation of Review Completion

Resource	Review Complete
Botany	8/10/2021 Lanny Flaherty
Cultural/Heritage	8/9/2021 Erik Harvey
Engineering	7/15/2021 Richard Mills
Fisheries	6/16/2021 Sarah Brandy
Fuels	7/12/2021 Mike Johnson
Hydro	6/17/2021 Dana Nave
Soils	6/15/2021 Mary Young
Silviculture	7/12/2021 Mike Johnson
Wildlife	8/5/2021 Julia Boland

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS REVIEW****NATIONAL FOREST MANAGEMENT ACT (NFMA) – LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN
CONSISTENCY**

The pertinent specialist has reviewed the proposal and made the following determinations regarding proposal consistency with applicable Land Management Plan direction, standards and guidelines.

Botany: Consistent**Range:** N/A**Cultural/Heritage:** Consistent**Recreation:** N/A**Engineering:** Consistent**Scenic Resources:** N/A**Fisheries:** Consistent**Soils:** Consistent**Fuels:** Consistent**Silviculture:** Consistent**Hydro:** Consistent**Special Management Areas:** N/A**Lands/Special Uses:** N/A**Wildlife:** Consistent**Minerals:** N/A**SUPPORTING PROJECT DOCUMENTATION**

Table 2: Applicable Project File Documentation to Support NFMA Compliance

Documentation Type	File Name (if applicable/needed)
All Specialist Reports	Project File in Box

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT**THREATENED, ENDANGERED, PROPOSED AND CANDIDATE SPECIES &/OR CRITICAL HABITAT**

The pertinent specialists reviewed the proposal and made the following determinations for threatened, endangered and/or proposed species: No threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species/habitat are located within the project area.

SENSITIVE SPECIES (FSM 2670)

The pertinent specialists reviewed the proposal and made the following determinations for sensitive species:

Table 3: Sensitive Species Impact Determinations

Species	Determination*	Rationale (or refer to other project documentation)
WILDLIFE:		<i>Only wildlife species with habitat within the proposed project area are listed here. Please see Biological Evaluation for the Sugar Vegetation Management Project (2008) for additional details.</i>

Species	Determination*	Rationale (or refer to other project documentation)
Northern Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	MIIH	Species may occur in the area, but the action will focus mainly on removal of downed trees which do not provide habitat. Some standing root-sprung trees will be removed, but the action will take place outside nesting season and therefore is not expected to negatively impact the Forest population.
Lewis' woodpecker (<i>Melanerpes lewis</i>)	MIIH	Snags will not be removed, RHCA's protected. Some standing root-sprung trees will be removed, but the action will take place outside nesting season and therefore is not expected to negatively impact the Forest population.
White-headed woodpecker (<i>Picoides albolarvatus</i>)	MIIH	Snags will not be removed. Some standing root-sprung trees will be removed, but the action will take place outside nesting season and therefore is not expected to negatively impact the Forest population.
Gray wolf	MIIH	As this is a generalist species, habitat exists, but there are no known den/rendezvous sites in the project area.
Bumblebee species: Western bumblebee (<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>), Suckley cuckoo bumble bee (<i>Bombus suckleyi</i>), Morrisoni bumble bee (<i>Bombus morrisoni</i>)	MIIH	Time frame of the action does not coincide with hibernation. By August most bumblebees are out of the nest and floral resources in the area are primarily spent.
Fir pinwheel (<i>Radiodiscus albiectum</i>), shiny tightcoil (<i>Pristiloma wascoense</i>), thinlipped tightcoil (<i>Pristoloma idahoense</i>)	MIIH	Habitat is moist forest with high canopy cover and complex ground heterogeneity; action in this habitat type is limited. Action won't affect habitat quality, but there is potential for direct mortality from machines. Potential soil compaction (see Soil specialist report).
Botany	NI	A review of existing inventory databases did not locate any documented Region 6 sensitive plant species within the project area, and field surveys of the project area did not indicate the presence of suitable habitat.

NI – No Impact; **MIIH**- May Impact Individuals or Habitat, but Will Not Likely Contribute To A Trend Towards Federal Listing Or Loss Of Viability To The Population Or Species; **WIFV** - Will Impact Individuals or Habitat with A Consequence That the Action May Contribute To A Trend Towards Federal Listing Or Cause A Loss Of Viability To The Population Or Species

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT (NHPA) – SECTION 106 REVIEW

The pertinent specialist has reviewed the proposal and made the following determination regarding Section 106 compliance:

No historic properties affected - 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1). Section 106 Review has been completed for the project area and no National Register eligible cultural sites were found.

Appendix B(19)-Proposed undertakings in areas that have been surveyed under an inventory strategy meeting current standards where no historic properties are affected.



TRIBAL CONSULTATION

Based on the nature of the proposal, the line officer/responsible official made the following determination regarding Tribal Consultation:

Consultation with American Indian Tribes has been initiated and is ongoing.

COMMENTS

This project was introduced to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in June 2021.

PERTINENT EXECUTIVE ORDERS

The line officer and/or applicable specialist(s) have determined the proposal is in compliance with the following Executive Orders (EO), which were deemed pertinent based on the nature of the proposal.

- EO 11988, Floodplain Management
- EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands
- EO 12898, Environmental Justice
- EO 13007, Indian Sacred Sites
- EO 13112, Invasive Species
- EO 13175, Consultation & Coordination w/ Indian Tribal Governments
- EO 13186, Migratory Birds
- EO 13443, Facilitation of Hunting Heritage & Wildlife Conservation

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) – EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Pertinent specialists have reviewed the proposal and made the following determinations with regards to presence of extraordinary circumstances:

Table 4: Extraordinary Circumstance Determinations

Resources Conditions Considered for Extraordinary Circumstances	Is there a degree of potential effect that raises uncertainty over its significance? Briefly explain. ¹
WILDLIFE	NO, there is no uncertainty
Federally listed threatened or endangered species, Designated	Rationale for Yes/No: Although habitat exists for some listed and

¹Be sure to provide resource context for rationale discussions. Is there something unique to this proposal or existing resource conditions that would lead to greater intensity of effects than would typically be anticipated for similar actions?



3106 Blowdown Salvage

Resources Conditions Considered for Extraordinary Circumstances	Is there a degree of potential effect that raises uncertainty over its significance? Briefly explain. ¹
critical habitat, Forest Service sensitive species	sensitive species, the action will not take place during breeding or nesting seasons, nor will it remove or significantly alter breeding, nesting, or roosting habitat for these species.
FISHERIES Federally listed threatened or endangered species, Designated critical habitat, Forest Service sensitive species	N/A, not present Rationale for Yes/No: Project activities will occur outside of riparian areas. All actions have predictable effects.
BOTANY Federally listed threatened or endangered species, Designated critical habitat, Forest Service sensitive species	NO, there is no uncertainty Rationale for Yes/No: Neither prefield review or field surveys revealed sensitive or listed plants within the project area. This project will use routine actions with predictable effects.
Floodplains, wetlands or municipal watersheds	N/A, not present
Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas	N/A, not present
Inventoried roadless areas	N/A, not present
Research natural areas	N/A, not present
American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites	NO, there is no uncertainty Rationale for Yes/No: Activities will stay within surveyed and approved boundaries.
Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas	



3106 Blowdown Salvage

DECISION MEMO

3106 Blowdown Salvage

U.S. Forest Service

La Grande Ranger District, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

Union County, Oregon

This decision incorporates all previous information in this document and included in the project file.

DECISION & RATIONALE

I have decided to authorize the activities described above in the [Proposal](#) section, to include any modifications identified during environmental analysis and review of regulatory compliance. Authorizing removal of windthrown trees from previous harvest units analyzed for mechanical treatments will allow for utilization of trees in support of local mills, reduce public safety concerns associated with windthrown/damaged trees and assist in reducing the spread of bark beetles from windthrown trees to remaining live trees. Application of described project design features will allow removal of windthrown trees in a manner that protects natural and cultural resources of the area.

APPLICABLE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION & FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS

The [Proposal Information](#) section above provides rationale for categorically excluding this action from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and for using the category found at 36 CFR 220.6(e)13. The [Environmental Analysis Review](#) section documents the finding that no extraordinary circumstances exist, along with findings required by other applicable laws and regulations, demonstrating compliance with the regulatory framework for the activities authorized by this decision.

AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS & PERSONS CONTACTED

This project was listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions. Additionally, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation were notified about this proposal in June 2021.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

I intend to implement this decision September 2021.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Decisions that are categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are not subject to an administrative review process (Agriculture Act of 2014 [Pub. L. No. 113-79], Subtitle A, Sec. 8006).

CONTACT

For additional information concerning this decision, contact:

Lisa Laufenberg-Soward, Sale Prep Lead, 3502 Hwy 30, La Grande, OR, 97850, 541-962-8542

Bill Gamble
La Grande District Ranger

August 11, 2021



3106 Blowdown Salvage

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.